

Continuing Education for Registered Environmental Health Specialists Questions and Answers



The Department of Health Services (DHS) is authorized to develop regulations establishing the requirements and standards for continuing education of Registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS) pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 106705. Upon the recommendation of the Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee, California Environmental Health Association, and California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health, DHS is proposing to adopt continuing education standards for REHS.

1. What are the proposed minimum requirements for continuing education?

The proposed regulations will require a minimum of twenty-four (24) contact hours of continuing education as a condition for REHS biennial registration renewal.

2. What is the difference between contact hours and continuing education units (CEU)? Which do I need to accrue for renewal of my registration?

A “contact hour” is equal to at least 50 minutes of participation in an organized learning experience. The Department of Health Services is proposing a 24 contact hour requirement for continuing education credit.

- One CEU equals 10 contact hours
- One quarter unit equals 10 contact hours
- One semester unit equals 15 contact hours

You will need 24 contact hours or 2.4 CEUs of continuing education credits that must be obtained within your 2-year renewal cycle (i.e., The course must be completed within the renewal cycle)

3. What types of topics and subjects are acceptable for continuing education credit?

Topics and subject matter for continuing education must be pertinent to the scope of practice of an REHS. Acceptable subject matter for continuing education shall include, but not be limited to, the following: food protection, solid waste management, liquid waste management, medical waste management, water supply, housing and institutions, bathing places, vector control, hazardous materials management, underground tanks, air sanitation, safety and accident prevention, land development and use, disaster sanitation, electromagnetic radiation, milk and dairy products, noise control,

occupational health, rabies and animal disease control, recreational health, bioterrorism, emergency preparedness, lead poisoning, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, epidemiology and communicable diseases, public health, and environmental health administration and management.

4. What options are available for REHS to meet continuing education requirements?

REHS will have a variety of options available to meet the continuing education requirements. Continuing education courses can be in the form of in-house training, postgraduate studies, seminars, lectures, conferences, workshops, extension courses, correspondence courses, and other similar methods of conveying continuing education.

The California Environmental Health Association, National Environmental Health Association, and California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health have been granted the authority by DHS to approve recognized providers and continuing education courses.

5. How do I know if a course is acceptable to meet the continuing education requirement? Who can approve continuing education courses?

As described in the previous paragraph, the California Environmental Health Association, National Environmental Health Association, and California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health have been granted the authority by DHS to approve recognized providers and continuing education courses. These organizations will be advertising and posting a list of approved courses on their respective web pages.

All continuing education contact hours should meet the following requirements:

- The course, class, seminar, or presentation is not less than 50 minutes.
- The subject matter of the course, class, seminar, or presentation is pertinent to the scope of practice for a registered environmental health specialist (see acceptable subject matter listed above).
- The course, class, seminar or presentation is taken within the current registration renewal period. Courses that were completed prior to the previous renewal date cannot be used to fulfill the continuing education requirement.
- The course, class, seminar, or presentation is verifiable. Verifiable courses issue certificates of completion with the following information:

- a. Name of enrollee – Your name.
- b. Title – A descriptive title of the seminar or course.
- c. Instructor – The individual, organization, or event that provided the information.
- d. Contact and phone number of continuing education provider.
- e. Location where the continuing education occurred.
- f. Date the contact hours were earned.
- g. Number of contact hours granted by the provider.

6. Who will audit and verify that REHS have met continuing education requirements?

DHS will audit continuing education courses and verify that the REHS have met the continuing education requirements.